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From the Editor

It's been an eventful 6 months since I last wrote to you. While I wasn't able to attend KansasFest this year due to a workshop I was giving at the same time, I did follow the news from there closely via reports on Delphi, and it seems that it was an even better event than the one I attended in 1997. There were several new products shipped at KFest, including NiftySpell, GSoft BASIC, WebWorks GS, the TABBS CD-ROM, and Babelfish, as well as updates to GraphicWriter III, Disk Access II and Spectrum. I will be purchasing several of these items and you can plan on seeing reviews of GSoft BASIC, WebWorks GS, Babelfish, and NiftySpell in the next issue of *The Apple Blossom*.

On a personal note, I am no longer working for the Museum of Science in Boston, and have begun a mixture of contract work and consulting doing Macintosh technical work, AppleScripting, and school workshops and teacher training. Theoretically this will give me more time at home, and I can look forward to more time to spend on *The Apple Blossom* and *Hyper Quarterly.*

Please note that there will be one more issue of *The Apple Blossom*. After the next issue (Volume 3 number 6) I will continue to write about Apple II computers, but the files will be posted to the Apple Blossom web site. *Hyper Quarterly* number 3 is due in early September and number 4 will likely be delivered in January, 1999.

Hardware Report

Macintosh Floppy Disk Problems

Many of us have taken for granted a certain amount of compatibility between our Macintosh and Apple II computers. For instance, ever since the IIe card for the Mac LC (1991) it's been possible to use ProDOS formatted 3.5" floppy disks on a Mac (through use of the ProDOS System file that came with the IIe card software). Using ProDOS floppies was even easier when PC Exchange, a control panel for using MS-DOS floppies reached version 2.0 on the Mac, giving it ProDOS compatibility. This was just one sign that the Apple II hadn't been completely forgotten at Apple. Another was the hidden icon of a IIGS in a resource of the System Update file in version 7.5.3 of the Mac system software.

Now that the Mac has reached System 8.0, however, Apple seems to be forgetting about its original computer. With file sharing turned on, a Mac under System 8.0 and higher can no longer mount ProDOS disks. To use the disks, File Sharing needs to be disabled. Additionally, the new manual insert floppy drives on many Macs can have problems with 800 K disks in general and ProDOS disks in particular. Many have reported problems using ProDOS floppy disks with the Centris/Quadra 610 model.

Another problem noted by some users is that Macintosh hard disks with ProDOS partitions don't mount the ProDOS partition after updating to MacOS 8.0. The problem is a bug with Drive Setup 1.3 (the hard disk formatting utility for Macs). The solution suggested by Apple is to update the driver using an earlier version of Drive Setup.

Zip Plus Drive problems

Soon after Iomega Corp. began selling the Zip Plus drive, many people began reporting problems with the units. The Zip Plus is similar to the original Zip drive, and uses the same 100 Megabyte cartridges that the Zip drive uses. However, a single Zip Plus Drive is able to be used on both a SCSI or a Parallel port computer. This looked to be a boon for many folks who owned both a SCSI port computer (such as a Mac or a IIGS with RamFAST) and a Parallel port computer (such as a Wintel PC), but the boon is not quite as good as it looked at first. Iomega now warns its customers that the Zip Plus cannot be used with any cable other than the one that it came with (a 25-pin to 25-pin cable that senses the SCSI or Parallel port), nor can it be part of a SCSI chain. Nor should a Zip Plus drive be used with a PowerBook. While hardware damage will not result from such a configuration, data loss is quite likely. Customers who have inadvertently purchased a Zip Plus drive expecting greater compatibility have been able thus far to exchange the drive for a SCSI Zip drive. For more information, contact Iomega at 1-888-4446-6342.

Year 2000 Concerns

The Y2K or Year 2000 problem that has made the headlines in many places does affect Apple II computers. The problem has arisen because programmers in early days often used two digits to represent

years, with an assumed "19" at the beginning. Now that we are about to enter the 21st century, such programs may no longer work properly, as math based on the dates will be skewed. For instance, 2001 (represented by "01") may appear to the program as 1901. Such programs (Quicken for the Apple IIe comes to mind) are not likely to work after 2000, and the companies that originally published them don't seem very eager to reprogram them for their Apple II customers. Fortunately, Quicken does export files that can be read by Appleworks, so files need not be lost. But how you work with them very well might be.

The Operating System on your computer is a different case altogether, and should work for many more years smoothly. The following information is from Apple's web site.

http://www.apple.com/macos/info/2000.html

Many Apple II computers are still in use today. Their ability to handle dates after the year 2000 vary by model.

For example, an Apple IIGS running System 6.0 or later and GS-specific software should have no problems with dates beyond the year 2000. Users of an Apple IIGS systems running 8-bit applications will need ProDOS 8 V 2.0 or later to ensure handling dates correctly.

The Apple II, II+, IIe, IIc, and IIc+ do not have a system clock, but third-party clocks are available that can correctly handle the year 2000 and beyond.

Around the Web

There have been lots of changes for Apple II Web sites since I last wrote. Some of the most notable changes are listed below.

Change for Ground FTP site

Ground is now *ground.ecn.uiowa.edu*. To download software from Ground, type "ftp ground.ecn.uiowa.edu" at your UNIX prompt.

New Apple II FTP site

There is a new Apple II ftp site at: *trenco.gno.org*. To access it, use the same commands as above, but substitute the trenco address for the ground address.

Apple II FAQs and Nathan Mates

Nathan Mates, who has been an important utilities programmer and keeper of the Apple II Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) file on the Web has retired from Apple II computing, tired of fighting software pirates. This is an example of the problems that piracy causes, especially on a platform with so few developers.

The FAQ is no longer available on his web site, although an archive of the FAQ is still available at the following URL:

http://www.faqs.org/faqs/apple2/

GNO/ME v2.0.4

GNO/ME v2.0.4, the UNIX-like operating system for the Apple IIGS, has been reclassified by the authors freeware; it is now available for download from

ftp://ftp.hypermall.com/pub/gno

Guide to Toolbox Programming
Eric Shepherd has begun writing a guide to the GS Toolbox. Programmers can check it out at

http://www.members.home.com/sheppy/ToolboxGS/

Wolfenstein3D
Wolfenstein3D for the GS was released as freeware in February. For more details, see

http://www.sheppyware.ml.org/software/wolf3d_gs/index.html

System Requirements: Apple IIGS, 4 MB RAM required, Hard disk required, Accelerator card recommended (8 MHz or higher preferred). While the game is free (per the requirements of Sheppy's contract with the copyright holder Logicware) you can show your support for this prolific programmer by paying the shareware fee for the Wolfy level converter or Sheppy's ShiftyList 2.0. The download of Wolfenstein 3D is large. The original 1.0 version is 1 Megabyte in size, and the updater to version 1.0.1 is 416 Kilobytes. It is also possible to download the original game in sections.

KansasFest Web Site
The KFest committee has established a new web site at:

http://www.kfest.org

The dates for next year's conference have already been announced as July 21-25, 1999.

Product Announcements

SEVEN HILLS ANNOUNCEMENTS
At K'Fest '98, Seven Hills Solutions Specialists announced several upgrades and released some new products:

GraphicWriter III 2.1 upgrade
Among bug fixes and several other changes, includes an "Automatic text objects" option which turns off the auto-text creation when clicking outside a text box. Available Now!

Brand new: $65.00 (summer special: only $50.00 through 8/31/98)
Upgrade from v1.x: $15.00
Upgrade from v2.0: $ 6.50

SIS 1.1 upgrade
Major upgrade with many added features. Now supports Delphi, Vax, AIX UNIX and Debian Linux connections. Cookie support, proxy authentications, email enhancements, bookmark editor etc. Should be available at the end of September. Email sales@sevenhills.com and ask to be notified when the upgrade is available.

Spectrum 2.2 upgrade
Major upgrade with many added features and enhanced script support. Full TCP/IP integration for Marinetti 2.0 with up to 32 active sockets. Babelfish support, extended menu files, multiple init strings and signature support. Should be available at the end of September. Email sales@sevenhills.com and ask to be notified when the upgrade is available.

Disk Access II
Major enhancement of disk utility program. Features powerful window displays with customizable options. Copy, move, duplicate, find and view files. Available now!
Brand new: $20.00 (summer special: only $15.00 through 8/31/98)
Upgrade: $11.50

Babelfish
File import and export translation utility. Supported by SuperConvert 4.0, Spectrum 2.2, and the supplied Convert File NDA. FREEWARE Available Now! Download from Delphi, Genie, and other sources, or send $5.00 (outside FL) or $5.35 (inside FL) for a disk of freeware from Seven Hills, including Babelfish, !Help! NDA, and other goodies.
For further information contact:

Customer Service and Orders:
Email: sales@sevenhills.com
Web pages:
http://www.sevenhills.com/applesoftware/
Fax: 850-575-9445 anytime
Mail: 1254 Ocala Road, Tallahassee, FL 32304-1548
Phone: 850-575-0566 anytime
(press 7 to leave a voicemail message if a live operator doesn't answer)

Technical Support:
Email: support@sevenhills.com

Ordering Information:
When ordering any product please include:
Your name
Your shipping address
Your area code and phone number (optional)
Your preferred email address if you have one (optional)
A list of the items you are ordering
Payment information (credit card number and expiration date)

Visa/MasterCard/Discover credit card orders can be placed by email, fax, or regular mail (see Contact Information above). Be sure to include your card number and expiration date. You may also call and leave a voice mail message with the details of your order if the phone is busy. Just press "7" when you hear the greeting to leave your message. However you order, it will be filled promptly.
Seven Hills also accepts personal checks and money orders by regular mail.
For all orders add $3.50 shipping and handling per order (not per item).
Florida residents add 7% tax.
Foreign shipping is actual airmail cost, minimum of $3.50, charged to a credit card unless otherwise arranged.

Sales Policy:
All sales of software are final on opened packages. Sealed packages may be returned for a refund less the cost of shipping.

BYTEWORKS ANNOUNCEMENTS
GSoft BASIC

The Byte Works, famous in the Apple II world for its line of programming products and commitment to the Apple II com-

munity, is pleased to announce the release of GSoft BASIC, a new programming language for the Apple IIGS. It's a great choice for anyone who knows Applesoft but wants to go beyond its limits, as well as any programmer who wants a fast, easy to use language for creating text, graphics or desktop applications on the Apple IIGS.

Here's a few early comments from some Apple II luminaries who have used GSoft BASIC:

GSoft BASIC feels like home to anyone who knows Applesoft, but it's also an escalator that carries you up past anything that BASIC could do on a GS before. Larger, more elegant programs, Super Hi-Res graphics, more accurate calculations, Toolbox programming, Desktop programs, and even the Internet. Wherever you want to go today, you can go with GSoft.

Gareth Jones

FOR X%=$00 to $FF

PRINT "It's hard to believe that GSoft is an interpreter, especially when comparing it to some of the BASIC Compilers that were written for the GS. It's fast and very easy to use. GSoft seamlessly incorporates GS/OS and the Toolbox, giving it the power of a compiler when developing Desktop applications!"

NEXT X%

It's also the only basic that let's you use Hexadecimal in a FOR/NEXT loop!

Richard Cain

I've been waiting for an improved BASIC programming language for my IIGS for years and GSoft BASIC is it. Easy to learn and use, near Applesoft compatibility (but with none of the limitations), all the benefits of modern structured BASICs, full access to GS/OS and the IIGS Toolbox routines as well as the ability to add assembly language routines through user tools. GSoft BASIC has all of it and more. No more Applesoft for me!

Jeff Blakeney

GSoft BASIC is available for immediate shipment. If you act now, you save $10 off of the cover price! For all orders received before August 31st, 1998, you get GSoft BASIC for just $50, a $10 savings from the retail price of just $60. Include $5 for shipping in the U.S. and Canada; contact the publisher for shipping rates to other countries.

Incidentally, the shipping rate of $5 is per order, not per product. Save even more by ordering from ByteWorks' list of over 80 Apple II programs! If you don't have a list, just e-mail a request. A price list can be sent by e-mail, or a printed catalog by snail-mail.

Here's a detailed description of this exciting new package, as well as contact information for the publisher:

Technical Information

GSoft BASIC
A BASIC Interpreter for the Apple IIGS
GS-25 GSoft BASIC 1.0 $60

Includes: 329 page spiral bound manual, index, table of contents; 2 800K ProDOS disks.

System Requirements:

Apple IIGS
System 6.0 or better
1.125M RAM (2M recommended)
3.5 Floppy Disk Drive
Additional 3.5 Floppy Disk Drive or a hard drive

Companion Products:

GS-12 Talking Tools
GS-11 ORCA/Debugger

Contact:

Byte Works, Inc.
8000 Wagon Mound Dr. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120
Phone 505-898-8183
Fax505-898-4092
AOL: MikeW50
GEnie: ByteWorks
Internet MikeW50@AOL.COM

GSoft BASIC is the long-awaited answer to the Applesoft programmer who wants to move to GS/OS, or the programmer who needs a quick way to create a program without the hassle of a full compiler. You can choose between an extended Applesoft-like environment that will feel comfortable to any Applesoft programmer, but that includes extensions like RENUMBER and a full screen editor; or a version that runs from any ORCA compatible shell. (The ORCA shell is not included.) Either way, you can turn finished programs into applications that launch from the Finder using a simple utility that adds a run-time module to your BASIC program.

GSoft BASIC has all of the extensions you'd expect from a modern BASIC, like optional line numbers, PRINT USING, LINE INPUT (no comma problems!), structured statements and true subroutines and functions. It can use all of your available memory, so you can write huge programs that use lots of variable space. Strings can be up to 32767 characters long, double precision floating-point is available, and GSoft uses integer math for speed, supporting both short and long integers.

Unlike any other Apple IIGS BASIC, GSoft BASIC truly supports toolbox programming. Toolbox programming requires the use of pointers and records, something other BASICs don't have. GSoft BASIC has both.

While GSoft BASIC is an interpreter, and doesn't link directly with compiled and assembled programs, it still supports many of the popular ORCA programming tools. The Applesoft-like shell that comes with GSoft BASIC can use any ORCA compatible editor; you get a version of GSoft BASIC that will work from any ORCA compatible shell; GSoft BASIC works with ORCA/Debugger and Splat!, as well as any other ORCA compatible debugger; and GSoft BASIC supports user

tools for adding subroutines written in other languages. There are even samples of user tools written in assembly language.
So whether you are an experienced programmer looking for an environment for quick prototyping or a BASIC programmer from way back who wants a familiar language with all of the features you need to take advantage of the Apple IIGS, GSoft BASIC is a program you'll want to have for your Apple IIGS.

Here are just some of the major features you'll find in GSoft BASIC:

Language Features

•Full access to the Apple IIGS Tools.
•Write desktop programs, text programs or graphics programs that use QuickDraw without using the entire toolbox.
•Define and access your own libraries using User Tools.
•No fixed limit on program or variable space.
•Optional line numbers.
•Modern control statements, including:

IF-THEN-ELSE
DO-LOOP
WHILE-WEND
SELECT CASE
PRINT USING
LINE INPUT (For reading text with imbedded commas.)

•Named subroutines and functions with passed parameters and local variables.
•Disk I/O commands.
•Data types include SINGLE, INTEGER, LONG, DOUBLE, BYTE and STRING. Strings can be up to 32767 characters.
•Create types with names for easier to read programs.
•Supports records and pointers.
•Dynamic memory commands, including ALLOCATE, DISPOSE and SIZEOF.
•Loads Applesoft programs. Incompatible lines are flagged for manual change.
•Full toolbox support, including support for GS/OS, the ORCA shell and Talking Tools.
•Access to other languages via user tools.
•Includes two User Tools Libraries, with source code:

Game Paddle for accessing the game paddle ports.
Time and Date for reading the system clock.

FONTPIMP 1.0
Copyright 1998 Lysergic Software

Lysergic Software is proud to announce Fontpimp, the full featured, desktop-based, message center-aware, batch-processing, judgename-compliant, kitty pettin', font conversion utility which allows you to:

Convert Windows TrueType to GS (Macintosh)
Convert GS (Macintosh) to Windows TrueType
Edit relevant TrueType font information

Fontpimp is charityware. When started the program autosuggests a donation

based on a rate of ten cents per converted font. Fontpimp is available for download from Delphi.

NEW SOFTWARE FROM SHAREWARE SOLUTIONS II

NiftySpell

Shareware Solutions II, in association with Chris Vavruska, is pleased to announce NiftySpell, the first and only Universal Spell Checker for the Apple IIGS computer.

NiftySpell is a flexible and easy to use New Desk Accessory (NDA) that automatically loads whenever your system starts up. Once installed, NiftySpell adds a new menu item to the Apple Pull Down menu, and it can be accessed from any standard Apple IIGS program that supports New Desk Accessories. With NiftySpell installed, you can spell check documents right from your Finder Desktop or from within such diverse programs as Teach, Hermes, Freecell or HyperStudio.

In addition to the NDA, there is also a special Spectrum XCMD included that seamlessly integrates NiftySpell into the Spectrum telecommunications program, making it very convenient to spell check your outgoing e-mail and forum messages while using Spectrum or Crock O' Gold!

With NiftySpell, you'll never again be embarrassed by sending out important documents with spelling or typographical errors, and you'll always look your best in print when the words you use to convey your thoughts are spelled correctly.

Before NiftySpell, only those who used expensive word processing or desktop publishing software packages like AppleWorks, AppleWorks GS or GraphicWriter III could spell check their work. Now anyone can have the convenience of a spell checker within easy reach. If you can use a mouse, you can spell correctly!

NiftySpell will include a relatively small custom dictionary that Joe created from an AppleWorks Classic user dictionary. It has about 200 Apple II related names and proper nouns. You can use that, or you can create your own user dictionary.

NiftySpell allows you to create as many custom dictionaries as you want. So, if you desire, you can have one dictionary that includes only words related to your occupation, and another one for computer terms. You can swap which custom dictionary you want to use, on the fly.

NiftySpell requires an Apple IIGS, System 6.0.1, and a hard disk drive. It requires at least 512k of available RAM and at least 1.5 megabytes of hard drive storage space.

NiftySpell is published by Shareware Solutions II, and the cost is $20, which includes postage to anywhere in the world.

WebWorks GS

WebWorks GS was announced by Joe Kohn at K'Fest 98. A product of prolific shareware author Eric Shepherd, WebWorks GS is an HTML source editor; unlike graphical web page programs (such as PageMill on the Mac and PC) the program functions by having a user edit the HTML text document itself, with features that automatically construct tags, rather than visually laying out the web page.

WebWorks can import AppleWorks Classic documents, and can convert AW's formatting commands into HTML formatting tags. It can import text and Teach files as well.

Once a document is loaded into WebWorks, all further manipulation and HTML generation can be accomplished using user friendly pull down menus and pop up menus.Add colored text with your mouse. Create ordered lists from pull down menus. Create tables and and insert images in your trusty and familiar GS/OS environment.

WebWorks GS is available now, from Shareware Solutions II, for $20.

The TABBS CD-ROM

A brand new historical Apple II software collection that comprises the complete Apple II software libraries - collected over the past 18 years - from the British Apple Systems User Group (Apple 2000), the British IIGS Club, and the (British-based) Apple Bulletin Board System (TABBS) is now available. In addition, the British Apple IIGS Club put out a monthly newsletter in HyperStudio format, and all of those are on the disk as well. Each one of those newsletter disks contains articles, news, and of course software.

The TABBS CD-ROM has over 600 Megabytes of compressed files, making it one of the richest sources of Apple II software ever. The disc is a hybrid with software for the Mac and PC as well as for the Apple II, and is formatted as a single HFS partition, so it will work with all Apple IIGS and Macintosh computers equipped with a CD-ROM drive.

The TABBS Library Archive CD-ROM is now available exclusively from Shareware Solutions II for $25.

Orders

To order NiftySpell, WebWorks GS or the TABBS CD-ROM, send checks or money orders to:

Joe Kohn
Shareware Solutions II
166 Alpine St
San Rafael, CA 94901

HyperTalking — Creating a Kiosk Presentation

At the Museum where I worked, there are screens that continuously run slide shows, movies and advertisements. This type of continuously running screen show is known as a kiosk. You can use HyperCard to put together your own kiosk-type presentation, as I did last year for Halloween. A few HyperTalk commands allow the stack to run continuously, and you can incorporate image & sound.

Of course, you can use a kiosk program for more than holiday entertainment. A kiosk program could give directions, show off events and achievements at a school function, even provide interactive help. It all depends on your plan.

Getting Started-Make a Plan

To begin with, you'll need to plan out your program. Make an outline on paper of your kiosk program. Note down graphics

you'll need as well as sounds. Then begin looking for the graphics and sounds to include.

Gathering Graphics

Graphics can come from many sources: disk, CD-ROM, the Internet, and even your own creations.

If you wish to download graphics from the Internet, take stock of your conversion utilities. Table 1 below lists some common formats and the programs that can convert them for IIGS use.

Gathering Sounds

I also wanted sound and music in my program, so I gathered sounds from around the web and from CD-ROMs that I had available. Two good ftp sites are:

ftp.funet.fi and

www.wavplace2.com/hallow.htm

These sounds are generally in UNIX au or Windows WAV format, which are easily handled by either rSounder 3.0.

After gathering the sounds, I used rSounder to convert them to resource sound format, and rather than save them to disk, I appended them to the resource fork of the stack I was building. This embeds the sounds within the stack making them available at all times for playback.

Beginning the Stack

Once I had my graphics and sounds assembled, I began my stack. I created a new stack and on the first card made a black background by entering background mode (Command -B) and chose the paint bucket (fill) tool, black from the color palette, and clicked to fill the card with black. I then exited background mode (Command-B again), and created the second card. On this blank card I imported my first picture, centered it, then created a third card, and continued the process of building the stack. Once I had all of my cards created I went back to the first card to activate the first sound. I had a fairly long version of the X-Files theme that I found on an internet site, and I activated this sound, scripting it to play when the card was opened with the following bit of HyperTalk:

```
on opencard
  play "xfiles.theme"
end opencard
```

HyperCard will play a sound until its end, regardless of what else you do, so while a sound is playing, you can go to other cards or invoke other HyperCard functions.

Table 1—Graphic Formats and IIGS Conversion Utilities

Format	Graphic Conversion Utility
GIF	Convert3200, SuperConvert, GIF3200, Show Me,
JPEG	SuperConvert
BMP	SuperConvert, Convert 3200
IFF	SuperConvert, Convert3200, Prism
TIFF	Prism, Convert 3200
PNG	SuperConvert
PCX	SuperConvert, Convert3200

The one problem part of my stack was getting it to repeat. My first attempt led to a problem with "recursion", that is , the script ended up calling itself, and that can't go on forever without running into a memory problem. To solve this, I put in the following script to make the stack repeat itself endlessly:

```
on scareMe
  put the number of cards into cardNum
  put cardNum-1 into cardNum
  go card 1
  repeat cardNum times
    wait 2 seconds
    visual fade to black
    visual fade to card
    go next card
  end repeat
end scareMe
```

This handler gets the number of cards in the stack and uses that number to figure out how many times to repeat. By doing this, rather than putting in a definite number like 12, I don't have to touch the script if I add a new card to the stack. The repeat part of the handler waits two seconds after going to a card, fades to black, then goes to the next card. At each card a handler would play an appropriate sound.
Finally, on the last card (when the repeat would end), I had the following script:

```
on opencard
  play "Wolf.Sound"
end opencard
on idle
  wait 2 seconds
  scareMe
end idle
```

This script plays the sound "Wolf.Sound" then waits for HyperCard to idle. After two seconds, it calls the "scareMe" handler in the stack script and the whole show starts over.
You can download the complete stack from the Apple Blossom web site. This will let you get a closer look at the scripts used for this kiosk type program.

Steve Cavanaugh
Apple Blossom Publishing
P.O. Box 706
Brockton, MA 02303-0706

GSoft BASIC available now! New offerings from Shareware Solutions II! Updates galore!